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U.S. House of Representatives

Committee on Natural Resources

Washington, DC 20515

Opening Statement of Chairman Doc Hastings House Committee on Natural Resources Before the Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee Legislative Hearing on

**Four Bills to Expand American Energy Production, Create New American Jobs
Friday, November 16, 2011, at 9:30 a.m.**

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Earlier this month, Speaker Boehner outlined plans for an energy and infrastructure jobs bill that would link expanded American energy production with initiatives to repair and improve infrastructure. This would promote long-term, private sector job growth and remove barriers that stand in the way of American energy production.

The Natural Resources Committee is doing its part to advance this effort by moving forward with consideration of measures under our jurisdiction that will be included in the Speaker's bill.

The bills before us today are not just energy bills, they are job bills. Increased American energy production is one of the best ways to help jumpstart our economy. It will create over a million energy jobs and thousands of indirect jobs in a variety of sectors in every state throughout the country.

Increased American energy production is also one of the easiest ways to generate new federal revenue. Through lease sales, bonus bids and royalties, the federal government can raise billions in revenue by allowing new production on federal lands and in federal water.

Given the tremendous economic benefits – not to mention the national security implications – there is no reason why we should not provide access to our own energy resources located here at home.

In contrast to the actions taken by the Obama Administration with its new five year plan, the bill introduced by Rep. Stivers would open new offshore areas for energy production. These are areas with vast energy resources that are currently blocked from development. A majority of Americans support increased offshore drilling and the bill includes proposals that have already received bipartisan support in the House. We should move forward with a smart plan that allows new drilling to occur in areas with the greatest energy potential.

And, it's also well past the time to open a small portion – less than 3 percent - of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to responsible energy production. Rep. Don Young and I have introduced a bill that would do just that. ANWR is the single greatest opportunity for new energy production on federal land and it was specifically set aside for energy production by President Carter and Congress in 1980. This Committee has heard from a bipartisan group of

community leaders and elected officials who all spoke about the jobs and economic growth that ANWR production would provide.

Finally, the PIONEER Act by Subcommittee Chairman Lamborn will allow for the increased production of our U.S. oil shale resources in the West. It is estimated that the U.S. has over 1.5 trillion barrels of oil in shale – six times Saudi Arabia’s proven resources. We should develop that potential.

These proposals to allow new offshore and onshore energy production will generate substantial revenues –because these proposals open new areas that are currently closed to energy production. As this legislation moves through the regular legislative process, from hearing to markup to the floor, the exact score from CBO will be known.

One thing that’s certain, doing nothing will not create any new jobs or generate any new revenue. During these difficult economic times, with soaring debts and deficits and a highway fund that needs to be replenished, Congress should not pass up an opportunity to create jobs and generate billions in new revenue.

The revenue from these projects will make a significant contribution to help fund America’s road and bridges.

That’s why it makes sense to link the two issues of energy production and infrastructure. By increasing energy production we create new American energy jobs and also generate revenue that can help create infrastructure jobs. In short, this creates jobs and provides important funding without having to raise taxes on American families and businesses.

I thank Subcommittee Chairman Lamborn for holding this hearing and look forward to hearing from the witnesses.